

I believe I told you yesterday, that a hen alone is a little treasure to a man; for a day scarcely passes but she makes him a valuable present. If, as it sometimes happens, she ceases to furnish her master's table, it is with no other view than to stock his court-yard with new inhabitants, by hatching a brood of her own kind. For all these services she requires no other reward than the fragments of his table, and the refuse of his barn. Do not you both think, that the hen is a very valuable domestic? Did not she lay eggs, what would you do for custards and puddings?

Observe the conduct of this hen, my dear children, with her brood of chickens round about her, and you will find her a different creature to what she was before she became a mother. Her tenderness and affection for her young alter her very nature, and correct her imperfections: before, she was ravenous and greedy,

greedy, but now she is become very moderate and frugal in her eating.

If this hen should now cast her eyes on a grain of corn, a crumb of bread, or any thing, though ever so inconsiderable that is capable of being divided, she will not touch the least part of it, but give her numerous train immediate notice of her success, by a peculiar call which they all understand. They flock in an instant round about her, and the whole treasure is appropriated to their service. As for her own part, she is very careless of what she eats, and is contented with any thing she can pick up.

This industrious feathered parent, though by nature timorous, and apt to fly from the least animal whatever, when marching at the head of her little troop, is a perfect heroine, is fearless of all danger, and will fly in the face of the fiercest mastiff; therefore, do not, Billy, go too near a hen who has young chickens.

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